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Remarks before the Commercial Club of Chicago
GOVERNORS' BRIEFING

25 May 1953
4 May 1953

Memorandum: "The Nature of the Soviet Threat"

THE COMMUNIST BLOC AND AMERICAN SECURITY

Outline

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In today's world, intelligence has many important targets -- one primary - Soviet and Satellite world (Bloc).

- a. Its position following Stalin's death.
- b. Its potentialities -- economic, scientific (atomic), military.
- c. Its probable courses of action.

I. The post-Stalin Soviet world.

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1. October Party Congress intended to reorganize Soviet political machine for post-Stalin era -- Malenkov the heir apparent, but Stalin died before succession machinery "jelled".

After Stalin's death, while Malenkov allowed remain as titular head, other leaders apparently obliged him to scrap Stalin-Malenkov reorganization.

New machinery patterned on old Politburo system created with Committee form of government rather than single man's dictatorship.

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Possibly old Bolsheviks (Molotov, Bulganin, etc.), plus Army (Bulganin, Sokolowsky, Zhukov), and maybe Beria, teamed up against Malenkov & Co. In any event, today Malenkov is one of a small group not undisputed leader. (Evidence - Pravda proclaims principle of collective leadership and collective responsibility.)

3. Consequence of Stalin's death - Difficulty of power transfer after 25 years.
- a. Succession situation unsettled with evidences of administrative bureaucratic confusion.
 - b. Possible period of struggle for succession since Committee-type government transitory. (Refer Stalin-Trotsky post-Lenin struggles - and their avoidance making first policy declaration.)
 - c. Peace offensive indicates Soviet desire for period of lessened international tension (if cheaply buyable).
 - d. Vigorous fraternization program and desire promote East-West trade.

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- e. Unexplainable elements: reversal doctors' plot and scrapping Stalin as Soviet idol.

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- f. In overall estimate - important distinguish long-range policies from temporary tactical maneuvers. Lenin's policy of tactical retreats.

II. Soviet Potentialities.

1. Military capabilities.

II

This section could perhaps include something on "political priorities" (i.e., relations with Europe & Atomic Satellite)

(Nothing here the significant change brought about by Stalin's death)

Power to launch direct attacks from internal lines at will, directly or through satellites, at almost any given point in Europe, Middle East or Asia. (But query - How far does Moscow control Mao.-Laos invasion?) (See chart for Military strength - refer Mercator Map psychology.)

2. Scientific capabilities - Don't sell Soviet (plus German) science short.

- a. General - Refer development MIG-15 -- twin-jet light bomber IL-28, long-range bomber TU-4. Electronics. X (Moscow gadget)
- b. Atomic developments. Three tests -- one '49, two September-October 1951.

Have adequate quantity fissionable material within orbit, adequate scientific know-how aided by espionage. All evidence indicates substantial stockpile atomic bombs capable of mass destruction, if deliverable to target.

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- c. Soviet scientific training programs.
- 3. Economic capabilities. (See Charts)
 - a. Soviet orbit includes one-third world population largely self-sufficient. Industrial labor force increased at six times rate of population growth.
 - b. Industrial plant restored pre-war level by '48 and since increased by 50% to 60%.
 - c. Military expansion increased proportionately vastly more than consumers goods.
 - d. While in 1956 gross national product estimated to be only one-third that of U.S.A., military product nearly two-thirds of U.S.A.
 - e. In 1952 with steel production approximately one-third of U.S.A., two-thirds as much steel into armaments in U.S.S.R. as in U.S.A.

III. Estimate of Soviet Intentions

1. Develop peace offensive:

- a. To build up European-Asiatic neutralism.
- b. To split America from its Allies.
- c. To gain time to build up new Soviet leadership and perfect defenses, radar screens, interceptor aircraft, etc.

III
This section could be beefed up with a round-up by major areas (e.g., Far East, Germany, Latin America, etc.)

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2. To carry forward the cold war [by guerrilla-type operations of satellites and inside free world, by subversion, using front groups, peace congresses, youth organizations, and the hard corps of Communist Parties everywhere -- stealing peace and democracy slogans from the West.]

IV. Conclusion

1. Estimate that Soviet does not desire provoke early armed conflict with West.

Reasons for this conclusion:

- a. Defensive type air force, emphasis on radar and electronics.
- b. Industrial inferiority.
- c. Fear that atomic war, view our present superiority, whatever outcome, might wreck Kremlin regime. (Slavic caution - Tito's estimate)
- d. Past and potentially future successes in cold war -- (critical situation now in Indochina, Iran).
- e. Belief in growing disunity Western World.
- f. Hope for eventual economic collapse of capitalist system under continuing expenditures and pressures.

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Despite Soviet peace offensives, potential threat remains today, much as before Stalin's death. However, loss of outstanding leader has weakened them, and we still have preponderance of power as deterrent if united and dynamic.

Intelligence confirms that President's speech helped free world regain the initiative.

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